Golden Harvest Films, Inc. newsflash:

This summer, we're finally getting

Intimates

Director: Jacob Cheung
Starring: Carina Lau, Charlie Yang, Gwei Ah-lui, Theresa Lee

Running Time 125 minutes

In the 1940's, the only way for a Chinese woman to avoid being sold as chattel, and to gain independence, is "Ji Sor", or taking a vow of celibacy.

Yee Foon (played by Charlie Yang) had taken this sacred vow when she met the love of her life, Wong Sing. Violating all the rules of her society, Yee Foon has an affair with Sing and gets pregnant. But Sing, afraid of the consequences of his actions, abandons Yee Foon.

In order to leave behind a life of prostitution, Yuk Wan (Carina Lau) marries the young boss of a silk factory (played by Tung Wei) to become his eighth wife. However, he turns around and sells her to a client in order to complete a business deal.

The two women meet in the silk factory, where Yee Foon works. The strong-willed Yuk Wan, in spite of her own hardships, comforts Yee Foon. The two women take turns caring for each other, and find warmth in each other. The love each had been seeking is right there. Unfortunately, with the coming of the War, they are separated while escaping....

In the 1990's, Wei (played by Theresa Lee), an architect, is a typical tough woman of her time. Her relationship with the indecisive Wah (played by Winston Chao) makes her lose track of herself. She is thinking of going away when her father asks her to take his old nanny back to her home village for retirement. Wei takes this is a perfect excuse to leave the battlefield of love. The old nanny, Auntie Foon (played by Gwei Ah-lui) had taken a vow of celibacy. On this trip home, she wants to visit with some of her long-lost friends. Wei later discovers that Auntie Foon was, like herself, lost on the road of love in her youth, and it was for another woman....

INTIMATES (Ji Sor, 1997)
director: Jacob Cheung Chi-leung

Plot Summary:

Yeung Choi Nei escapes an arranged marriage by walking the road of a Ji Sor. After an affair with Chin Kar Lok she becomes pregnant. An attempted abortion nearly costs Yeung her life. The young owner of a silk factory (Carina Lau Ka Ling) rescues her. Lau and Yeung's share their romances, reflecting the experience of women during the 40's.

The "Self-Combed Women" of the Chinese title actually existed in 19th century Canton (there are still some today). They formed a society of women who chose a life of strict celibacy, to live apart from men. Jacob Cheung's film version should have been so much better: maybe it's because I had available only the truncated commercial release, not the full "director's cut". Beautiful production values support this story of two women's intimate friendship set in 19th century Canton and contemporary Hong Kong. The female stars, especially Carina Lau, Charlie Yeung, and Gua Ah-leh do some of their finest work here. But something is lacking: any sort of narrative power. The film is awkwardly constructed around an uninteresting contemporary story: the best part is told through repeatedly interrupted flashbacks. Still, it's gorgeous to watch, occasionally quite moving, and admirable in its ambition.

- - - Hong Kong Film Reviews

For plot summary - ATTACHED

~~See Additional Film Information (left pocket)~~

Alma Cremonesi

From: Alma Cremonesi <cremona@peoplepc.com>
To: Alma Cremonesi <cremona@peoplepc.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 23, 2000 2:11 PM
Subject: Fw: Intimates

Ji Sor (Intimates)

Intimates is an epic tale of love found, lost and hopefully to be found again. Director Jacob Cheung has created a sweet, honest and compassionate story of an unexpected love between two women that also reveals the existence of fascinating women-only organizations within traditional Chinese society.

Wai (Theresa Lee), a lusty young architect living in modern San Francisco, is fed up with her wimpy boyfriend, and decides to get out of town by taking a journey to China with her "Auntie" Foon (Gua Ah-leh). To her surprise, it becomes a voyage of self-discovery for both women, as Foon attempts to help Wai with her love life, and starts to recall her own true love.

Fifty years earlier, Foon (portrayed as a young woman by the winsome Charlie Young) chose the virgin life of the Comb Women in order to avoid marrying a man she did not love. At first Foon is distracted by a hunky fisherman. But when she is hired as a maid by the beautiful Wan (Carina Liu in an outstanding performance that won her best acting honors at the Hong Kong Film Awards), Foon finds real love. Cheung's beautifully crafted film evokes all the pain, the joy and importance of that love, and Foon's undying devotion to Wan five decades after they met. (Hong Kong 1997 121 min. 35 mm Cantonese and Mandarin w/English subtitles)

From other festivals:

"Intimates was the surprise hit of the Seattle Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. We filled a 500 seat theater and women left the theatre laughing and crying. I am showing it here in LA at OUTFEST this summer, because I love it so much!"

Kirsten Schaffer

OUTFEST

LOS ANGELES, CA

"Intimates is a wonderful, very epic film. Our audience really liked it and had a great response to it. It is rare that we ever get a film that spans over a long period of time so it features both younger women and older women, something for everyone."

Jennifer Morris

Festival Co-Director

San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival

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Rock the Boat (1999)

Rock The Boat, a film by Bobby Houston, is a great piece of kinetic art, a movie that puts you right in the middle of a 10 day, 2,250 mile TransPac yacht race from Los Angeles to Hawaii. The camera is hand held by Houston who was pulling regular two and four hour sailing shifts at the same time that he was filming the documentary. The result is a wave-like motion to the camerawork that gives viewers the feeling of half queasiness, half exhiliration that was a constant onboard this epic voyage.

There is a great deal more to this film. The yacht *Survivor* was crewed entirely by HIV positive yachtsmen, chosen for their knowledge of the sea as well as their ability to get along in grueling conditions. We meet each member, find out about his entry into the HIV world, his despair upon finding out the news, and then, in every case, his discovery that HIV is not a death sentence. Certainly that was the reason underlying producer Rob Hudson's desire to make this film: to demonstrate that people who are HIV positive have the same chances at greatness as anyone else.

This is not just a feel good film. The sailing footage is fascinating, the difficult crewing decisions heart wrenching ("How do you tell someone who has AIDS that he didn't make the AIDS boat?"), and the approach of Hurricane Dolores a constant worry, adding dramatic tension to the film. Making the viewer feel like a participant in the crew's struggle is a powerful accomplishment for a documentarian who does not have the luxury of a script to fall back on. Houston shot over 100 hours of tape and logged 2,000 hours in the editing room. His diligence paid off.

The members of the crew are not actors. No one person stands out over any other, but the voice of reason definitely comes from the ship's cook, Ted Taylor, often caught in the middle between the temperamental captain John Plander, and Rob Hudson, seemingly the voice of reason. *Rock The Boat* brings to the surface many psychosexual issues that are part of the gay world. For example, Plander views the men who are not experienced sailors as lesser men - 'faggots,' in his words - and is not afraid to say so. That these and many other smaller issues did not explode into open conflict is a testimonial to the captain and this amazing crew. *Survivor* did survive. It finished 19th out of the 37 boats that began this 1997 race. *Rock the Boat* is a loving and exciting tribute to the courage exhibited and accomplishment achieved during those two weeks in the Pacific.

- - - DAK (culturevulture.net)...

Rock the Boat (1992)

'Rock the Boat': An HIV-Positive Crew Vs. 2,200 Pacific Miles

They're either stupid or brave; it depends on the moment," jokes a crew member of the Survivor, a racing sloop sailed by a crew of 11 HIV-positive men in the grueling 1997 Trans-Pacific Yacht Race, known as TransPac.

Watching "Rock the Boat," Bobby Houston's moving documentary of this tumultuous 2,200-mile race from Southern California to Hawaii, you can only marvel at the courage and stamina of the sailors making a voyage that is about the farthest thing imaginable from a luxury cruise.

Before setting sail, more than one crew member had had little or no experience on the water. During the 10-day voyage, the Survivor was threatened by a hurricane, suffered severe damage and nearly capsized several times. Of the 39 boats that competed, only 32 finished. The Survivor placed a respectable 19th.

The real victory of the Survivor, of course, was in simply going the distance. Although there were numerous minor injuries and was plenty of seasickness on a voyage one crew member describes as like being continuously tossed around on a roller coaster in the dark, no one died or became seriously ill.

At the beginning of the film, the crew members introduce themselves one by one, each naming the year he learned of his HIV-status. Many have lost one or more lovers to AIDS, not to mention countless friends, and their stark tales of loss are simply heartbreaking.

Before the race, the names of many of those lovers and friends were inscribed on the ship's hull, both as a memorial and a prayer summoning the spirits of the dead as guardian "angels."

One sailor after another recalls interpreting the news of his own HIV status as a death sentence that is later commuted by the arrival of life-prolonging AIDS drug cocktails. Among other things, the Survivor is shown to be a floating pharmacy of expensive medications.

Because the TransPac is one of the world's fastest and most hazardous boating competitions, few members of the crew really knew what they were in for when they joined. The maneuvering of a small sailing ship buffeted by 20- to 30-knot winds and huge waves for much of the journey required rigorous 24-hour-a-day teamwork just to keep the vessel afloat.

"Rock the Boat," which opens in New York on Friday, balances brief incisive portraits of the 11 sailors with an account of the voyage and its preparation. Its mastermind, Robert Hudson, is a hard-driving 36-year-old Los Angeles businessman and sailor who organized the team and raised much of the money to purchase the ship.

Filmed with just a single camera on board, the movie forcefully conveys the sense of living in extremely cramped quarters, racing across the Pacific while being tossed around like a cork.

Although there are mentions of growing strife among the crew members as the voyage progressed, the movie doesn't have time to develop any personal stories. It does suggest that tension between Hudson and the ship's captain, John Plander, a doctor and experienced seaman who began to lose patience with the more inexperienced crew members, nearly reached the breaking point.

But there's nothing like making it safely through the thick of battle to bring a disparate and quarrelsome group together in the end. "Rock the Boat" leaves you cheering for each and every one.

- - - STEPHEN HOLDEN (New York Times)